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ABSTRACT

This publication provides business with a detailed guide for becoming involved in one important option for business/education partnerships: school-to-work transition programs, or Jobs Collaboratives. A rationale is offered for business to join a collaborative effort as a first step to understanding schools and as a basis for more systemic change. The successful elements of a model Jobs Collaborative program are detailed, including the steps needed to develop and sustain the process. Specific profiles of successful Jobs Collaborative programs currently operating in Boston, Louisville, and Portland (Oregon) are highlighted. The publication also identifies key planning issues that must be addressed in designing this partnership effort. Finally, individual and shared roles and responsibilities of business, education, and the intermediary organization are each described and carefully delineated in a graphic model. A 13-item reference/resource list is attached. (YLB)

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WHO WILL DO THE WORK?

A Business Guide for Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce

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WHO WILL DO THE WORK?

A Business Guide for Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our nation's productivity and competitiveness depend on our ability to maintain a quality workforce. NAB's involvement with workforce issues over the past two decades has convinced us that corporate America must do a better job of communicating to schools the skills they need in new workers and in helping schools produce individuals with these skills. ***Who Will Do The Work? A Business Guide For Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce*** helps business begin the dialogue with the schools and offers business people and others a specific guide to establishing a Jobs Collaborative in their local community.

School-to-work transition programs, or Jobs Collaboratives, are school-based work preparation programs that enhance the education of students, particularly those at risk of dropping out. These programs are partnerships formed among schools, businesses, and typically intermediary groups such as a Chamber of Commerce or a Private Industry Council. Schools commit to improve the education of students using measurable outcomes, and businesses agree to provide priority access to jobs for these students.

Jobs Collaborative programs focus on the job readiness and job placement of students, challenging both business and education with specific responsibilities and expectations. By incorporating the experience of preparing for and maintaining a job as a part of the education of youth, these programs invest employers in helping to prepare their future workforce. Business provides input into the work readiness training and supplies summer, part-time, and full-time employment opportunities. Through effective supervision and guidance, business also helps to develop the potential of these new workers.

In ***Who Will Do The Work? A Business Guide For Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce***, NAB outlines the successful elements of a model Jobs Collaborative program including details of the steps needed to develop and sustain the process. A rationale is offered for business to join a collaborative effort as a first step to understanding schools and as a basis for more systemic change. Specific profiles of successful Jobs Collaborative programs currently operating in Boston, Louisville, and Portland are highlighted. The publication also identifies key planning issues that must be addressed in designing this partnership effort. Finally, individual and shared roles and responsibilities of business, education, and the intermediary organization are each described and carefully delineated in a graphic model.

The National Alliance of Business believes that through access to jobs, we can spark the interest and willingness of young people to complete their education. A Jobs Collaborative can help youth understand the connection between their education and their future. A job, in combination with academic training and support services, helps our young people complete their education and ultimately leads to a quality workforce.

In developing ***Who Will Do The Work? A Business Guide For Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce*** as one publication in its ***Corporate Action Package***, NAB seeks to increase business' understanding of education and youth issues. NAB is attempting to help business define appropriate roles in education reform. This publication enables business leaders to work with educators and other community leaders to build local programs that will prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs.

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FOREWORD

There is no better way to improve business' chance for success than developing well-prepared, job-ready workers who think on their feet, learn on the job, and take on new challenges. Clearly, the key to success is a good education. Although America's education enterprise is a $350 billion a year business, too many of today's students are deficient in basic skills and unprepared for the increasingly complex jobs in our growing economy. A good education is costing us more and more, as we find ourselves paying for it three times—through our public schools, remedial education programs, and basic skills training programs.

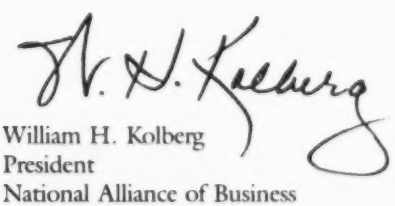
Our failure as a nation to educate our students adequately, particularly the growing numbers that come from "at-risk" and disadvantaged backgrounds, presents our nation with a civic and economic crisis all of us must address. We cannot expect educators to shoulder this burden alone. In particular, the business community has a special role to play in assisting educators to restructure education to respond to the needs of the modern workplace and the requirements of today's society.

NAB believes that the effectiveness of business leaders in educational reform is a direct function of their level of understanding of the issues and their capability for effective action. In an effort to increase business' understanding of education and youth issues and to help define business' roles in education reform, the Alliance is developing a comprehensive ***Corporate Action Package***. The ***Corporate Action Package*** is designed to increase the effectiveness of the business person as an advocate for education reform and to increase the overall efficiency of the educational reform process in individual communities.

Who Will Do The Work? A Business Guide For Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce, one publication in the ***Corporate Action Package*** series, provides business with a detailed guide for becoming involved in one important option for business/education partnerships: school-to-work transition programs. Involvement in school-to-work transition programs or "*Jobs Collaboratives*" can serve as a valuable first step toward school improvement. In working systemically and collaboratively with local schools, business can directly link education with workplace demands and improve the knowledge, values, and skills that young people bring with them to the workplace.

NAB's long history of work with "at-risk" youth and our experiences managing a national education improvement project in twelve major cities, has convinced us that Jobs Collaboratives can help sustain business commitment to the education improvement process. Jobs Collaboratives provide a strong foundation of mutual trust and shared achievement between educators and business people that is a necessary prerequisite for substantive educational reform.

The recommendations included in ***Who Will Do The Work? A Business Guide For Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce*** are consistent with current federal policy proposals for more intense youth education and employment services, including year-round programming, by our public employment and training system. The success of this effort will depend to a great extent on the leadership role played by business volunteers and private industry councils, the local business-led organizations that administer federally funded employment and training programs.



William H. Kolberg
President
National Alliance of Business

INTRODUCTION

Threatened with a severe shortage of talent, corporate America is becoming a supporter of and active player in changing the way we educate our youth. Companies are looking for ways to communicate to schools the skills employers need in new workers and to insure that the schools are capable of producing entry-level workers who have those skills. Business/education partnerships are one avenue for achieving this match, and school-to-work transition programs provide schools and business with a very promising agenda for joint action.

School-to-work transition programs, or Jobs Collaboratives, are based on the premise that introducing students to all aspects of a job—preparation, placement, and performance—can have a positive effect on the education of youth. Teaching a young person about workplace expectations; how to prepare for, find, and keep a job; and providing effective supervision and role models are all important elements in enhancing a youth's education. A job can provide an important link for youth between education and its potential rewards. These youth are able to learn, through real work experiences, why they need to know specific skills.

For students not going on to college, the transition to jobs is often difficult. Access to a job is based on supply, demand, and information. Typically, and especially for middle class youth, finding a job depends on a personal referral and reference. Urban school students often lack this network of information and access. A school-to-work transition program creates a network for them, often through an intermediary organization that bridges education and employment.

One school-to-work transition model, which we are calling a "Jobs Collaborative," focuses on the job readiness and job placement of students, challenging both business and education with specific responsibilities and expectations. It is a partnership formed among schools, businesses, and, typically, an intermediary group, such as a chamber of commerce or a private industry council. Jobs Collaboratives satisfy each partner's needs, providing good jobs for youth and good workers for employers. These programs invest business in educating youth at school and on the job, and they incorporate the experience of preparing for and maintaining a job into young people's education. Jobs Collaboratives differ from other school-to-work transition programs in that business and the schools assume joint responsibility for program planning, management, and outcomes.

A Jobs Collaborative may either be a first step in building trust between business people and educators or one component of a larger school improvement plan. While this program may initially be viewed as a discrete activity, the partnership may lead to more involvement of business in comprehensive school improvement. Working together on the Jobs Collaborative, school, business, and community leaders come to recognize and trust each other's commitment to the solution and hold the other partners accountable for performance.

In a Jobs Collaborative, students receive training in preparing for the workplace as well as finding, getting, and keeping a job. Educators, in conjunction with an intermediary organization, provide this training. Business helps to develop this training and provides summer, part-time, and full-time employment opportunities. Business also provides guidance to these student workers so they can continue to develop their potential. The intermediary organization coordinates the activities of the partners and manages the day-to-day program operations. Program organization and management are customized locally to reflect available jobs, skills that are needed and the kind of training that will work best. A successful program will prepare students for the world of work, secure jobs from local businesses, refer qualified students to job openings, and follow up with both the student and employer.

"We need workers who are able to think on their feet and learn the job quickly. However, our schools are producing entry-level workers who lack the basic skills necessary to do the jobs that we have available. Faced with this (skills gap) and the increasing expense of overcoming it, we as business people cannot take success for granted any longer."

John Carter
Chairman, National Alliance of Business
President & CEO, The Equitable Financial Companies

All youth need to learn how to prepare for the world of work, whether they are planning to enter the workforce directly after high school or not. A school-to-work transition program can motivate at-risk youth to see the potential rewards of staying in school. Developing basic skills, learning about the demands of the workplace, developing a network of adult contacts and role models who are gainfully employed, and learning how to present oneself to an employer are important steps toward obtaining employment.

While developing a Jobs Collaborative is not the single answer to school reform, it offers a way for business to make a significant contribution to the education of young people. Business can help youth make the connection between what they learn today and what they can do tomorrow.

A Model Jobs Collaborative Program

☐ The purpose of a Jobs Collaborative is to prepare students for the workforce through business/education partnerships. NAB's research and experience in collaborative development has identified the following elements of successful school-to-work transition programs:

1) Sustained and visible commitment and leadership

Business, education, and community leaders build and maintain a continuing commitment to the program among their colleagues and throughout their organizations.

2) A mutually agreed upon goal

The usual goal of a school-to-work transition program is to encourage at-risk and other youth to stay in school, succeed academically, and make the transition to the world of work or postsecondary education. This goal is achieved through the provision of special academic programs and summer, part-time, and full-time jobs in the private sector.

3) Quantifiable commitments and measurements of success

- Number of jobs to be pledged.
- Number of students to be referred or placed.
- Long-term results—improved attendance and achievement; permanent job or postsecondary education.
- Increased graduation rate.

4) An intermediary organization to perform the following duties:

- Develop program framework and management system.
- Develop and maintain a system of communication between schools and businesses.
- Follow up on business job pledges to identify specific jobs for students.
- Provide job readiness training in conjunction with schools and businesses. The job readiness curriculum should provide students with information about job market opportunities and expectations; such skills as completing applications, preparing resumes or personal profiles, interviewing; and developing positive work attitudes, ethics, and habits.
- Match students with appropriate jobs and refer them for interviews. An appropriate job will match student skills, interests, and aptitudes with the performance and work behavior requirements of the position.
- Provide follow-up services to students and employers to address workplace concerns and monitor student progress.
- Provide job counseling and personal counseling for students.
- Refer students for other support services, such as health and transportation assistance.
- Establish a system to track job pledges, interviews, placements, and student progress.
- Establish interim measures with business and education to review progress toward program goals and take corrective action as needed.

These management duties are best performed by a "neutral" intermediary organization—not the employer or the school—such as a Chamber of Commerce, Community-Based Organization, or Private Industry Council. This neutral position helps the intermediary organization represent the interests and concerns of the school, the employer, and the student objectively.

5) Commitments from all partners

Private Sector Commitments

- Pledge appropriate job opportunities.
- Hire qualified students.
- Orient and train supervisors.
- Provide job-related support services to students while on the job and in the classroom (e.g., mentoring, career orientation).
- Establish a communication system with the schools through the intermediary organization.

School System Commitments

- Identify schools to participate in the program.
- Identify students for participation.
- Provide academic, remediation, and support services, directly or by referral as needed (in conjunction with the intermediary).
- Develop, in conjunction with business and the intermediary, curriculum to prepare students for jobs; develop standards for skill development.
- Establish and maintain a data base for tracking student progress and measuring program progress against goals.

Student Commitments

- Participate in all aspects of the program.
- Perform satisfactorily on the job.
- Maintain or improve grades.
- Maintain or improve attendance.

Developing and Sustaining the Collaboration

The Alliance's work in business/education partnerships during the past three years has clarified what is necessary to sustain these sometimes delicate relationships.

The collaborative's leadership from business, education, and government must agree on the problem and share a broad and practical vision for addressing it. The nature of a collaborative may require participating institutions to change ways of doing business. A shared vision dictates a direction for plans, goals, and timetables—creating a common ground on which to proceed.

Initial plans, goals, and activities should be defined for both business and education, reflecting both the broad and practical visions. The broad vision sets goals. The practical vision embodies the strategy for achieving it. For example, if the collaborative's leadership agrees that improving the future workforce through increasing the youth employment rate is the broad vision, then providing more opportunities for connecting students to the world of work can be a practical vision. The piece of the plan to address this would be the school-to-work transition program. This sets a direction for developing specific goals, timetables, costs, and activities for increasing the local youth employment rate.

The leadership of the collaborative must be visibly committed to the project and able to transfer that commitment throughout the organization. A consistent commitment is necessary to carry the project from the initial vision, through implementation to monitoring progress against original goals. The problems are too difficult, the collaborating institutions too different, the reward systems too geared to other outputs to permit substantial activity without strong leadership. Top leadership from each different and distinct institution must commit to supporting and sustaining each institution's stake in the program and consistently convey this message.

Once begun, a collaborative needs to be nurtured and maintained if it is to meet the needs and challenges of organizational change. The following are ways that a collaborative can institutionalize the change process it has begun.

To insure accountability, a systematic and regularly planned **review mechanism** is needed to assess progress and modify working plans. One possibility is quarterly meetings to review progress and identify any needed actions to support the goals of the collaborative.

An **intermediary organization** or **collaborative agent** is needed to organize meetings, collect and analyze information, and deal with daily problems. The Private Industry Council, Chamber, or other entity as the intermediary organization provides the neutrality.

Implementing staff are designated to initiate the activities of the collaborative and to be accountable for them. These individuals should be included in planning the initiative. Personnel directors, teachers, or administrators are ultimately responsible for implementing the plans.

Funding is allocated by all sectors and is made available for ongoing maintenance of school and business activities. Collaboratives highlighted in this publication are supported by funding from multiple sources.

It is evident that schools and businesses have to approach one another as equals to establish an effective collaborative. The partners, while disparate in their overall functions, agree that **the community's students need access to jobs, to enhance their education, help them to be productive citizens, and provide business with a source of entry-level workers**. The individual partners must also realize that they cannot accomplish these ends by themselves. The concept of a "partnership" implies that each partner has expectations of the other. If these expectations are not met in the agreed-upon timeframe, reassessment of the partnership is in order.

Three Examples of Successful Jobs Collaboratives

Three cities—Boston, Louisville, and Portland (Oregon)—have been particularly successful in building school/business partnerships through Jobs Collaboratives. Their experiences provide examples of ways these programs can be designed and managed.

The Boston Compact

The Boston Compact, one of the first and best known business/education partnerships, is a citywide collaborative effort to bring about measurable improvement in public school education. It is characterized by strong, committed business and school leadership; defined goals for addressing the problem; and a viable intermediary, the Private Industry Council (PIC).

At the core of the Compact is an agreement between the schools and business. Subsequent agreements involve postsecondary schools and unions, all working toward improvement of education through collaboration. In return for measurable gains by the high schools in student achievement, attendance, and reduced dropout rates, the business community provides priority hiring to qualified public school students and graduates.

The initial Compact agreement was made in 1982. Five years later, all participants shared disappointment that the schools had not made more progress toward educational improvement. The city and business community delayed signing a new Compact (Compact II) until they had school and union assurances that they would make an effort to improve educational quality through shared decision making at the school level. Other elements in Compact II include the following goals:

- increased opportunities for parental involvement
- comprehensive postgraduate follow-up services
- programs to reduce the dropout rate
- increased alternative education opportunities
- increased achievement levels
- a comprehensive pre-college curriculum

The Compact process has created and expanded employment and education initiatives for Boston's youth. Surveys reveal that almost all of Boston's public school graduates go on to higher education, work, or military service, although the number of dropouts is a continuing concern. This performance is significant given the high incidence of minority and disadvantaged youth within the school district.

The Jobs Collaborative is a key program in the Compact and began before the initial agreement was signed. It is a school-to-work transition program that provides career counseling, summer jobs, and placement assistance to Boston's public high schools' 11th and 12th grade students. The objective in Boston is to provide a sequence of job opportunities—summer, part-time, full-time—for all students not going on to college full time. The Jobs Collaborative operates in 15 of the city's 17 high schools (only the two college preparatory schools are excluded.) Last year, the program placed 1400 students during the school year, 3000 during the summer, and over 1000 in full-time jobs following high school graduation. Surveys conducted nine months after graduation revealed that 90 percent of all graduates with Compact jobs are still on the job or have gone back to full-time education.

The Boston PIC is the intermediary, the vital element in the success of the Jobs Collaborative. It has developed and maintained a system for job readiness training and coordinates the complex task of linking hundreds of employers with thousands of students. As the intermediary between businesses and schools, it is committed to both the education of young people and to meeting the needs of the job market. The PIC's independence from the schools and business allows it to be responsive to and balance the needs of both sectors, as well as monitor them according to defined goals and objectives. The PIC supervises, organizes, and manages the program and is responsible for program tracking and accountability.

Career Specialists, selected jointly by the PIC and the school principal, are assigned to each high school. Funding for the Career Specialists, who are PIC employees, is supplied by a school department appropriation. The Career Specialists have primary responsibility for implementing the program in their schools. Their responsibilities cover a wide range of activities including student recruitment, job development, job readiness curriculum creation and delivery, trouble shooting, and personal counseling. Career Specialists work with businesses to identify available jobs and their requirements. They also help business understand their new workers and prepare them for the workplace.

According to business leaders, school system representatives, and program participants, the most crucial elements of Boston's successful school-to-work transition program are:

The principle of measurement. Developing a measurement system is critical to the credibility of the program. A survey that reaches 80 percent of the students each fall enables the PIC to know where graduates are working and what their wages are allows constant measurement of the results of the effort. In addition, according to PIC staff, people strive hardest to accomplish that for which they are measured, can gain recognition, or are held accountable. This is the key management idea of the Compact overall

and the Jobs Collaborative in particular.

- **The organization of businesses to develop jobs for Boston youth.** The commitment of business to organize, on a city-wide basis, part-time jobs after school and full-time jobs for graduates was new to Boston. Since over 700 firms participate in hiring, no one firm has to make an extraordinary effort in pledging jobs.
- **The involvement of an intermediary organization, committed to both the education of young people and a dynamic job market.** The PIC staff is directly responsible to its Board and to the business leaders who are publicly accountable for meeting their Compact commitments.
- **Full-time, year-round staff on the intermediary's payroll.** Given the number of tasks to be accomplished, full-time staff are devoted to the Jobs Collaborative.
- **Job opportunities available but not guaranteed to eligible youth.** Student workers must earn their jobs through records of school achievement, attendance, and evidence of work maturity. Students are given priority hiring as long as they are qualified and can do the job.

A 1985 Bureau of Labor Statistics survey, which examined employment rates of high school graduates, helps to demonstrate the impact of the Jobs Collaborative program. After three years of program operation, comparing youth employment rates in Boston with the national average, the following is revealed:

	Black	White
US	28%	58%
Boston	60%	62%

For more information on the Boston Compact, contact: Michael Taylor, Executive Director, Boston Private Industry Council, (617) 423-3755.

The Louisville Education & Employment Partnership

The Louisville Education & Employment Partnership is an alliance of Jefferson County's business, government, and education sectors. Its goal is to increase education and employment opportunities for the county's youth in exchange for improved academic, technical, and social skills. The school superintendent and business community have shared a long and positive relationship, which created an atmosphere of trust in the formation of the Partnership and encouraged equal input from all partners—the superintendent of the Jefferson County Public Schools, the mayor, the county executive, the chair of the Private Industry Council, and the chair of the Chamber of Commerce. These individuals created the Partnership in 1987 and became its Executive Committee. The Partnership's executive director is the liaison between the superintendent of public schools and the business leadership.

Under the direction of its business chair, the Partnership conducted a United Way-style campaign, using a core group of business leaders to recruit their peers to pledge job opportunities. At the same time, the Partnership worked with the schools to determine student eligibility and select staff (Career Planners) to work in each of the high schools. Students are eligible for inclusion in the program based on school achievement, attendance, school performance, and economic status. To remain eligible and qualify for Partnership jobs, students have to maintain 95 percent school attendance, maintain or improve classroom performance, develop good work habits, and meet employer expectations. During the program's first year, 9th and 12th grade students were targeted; all high school grade levels are now being served.

Career Planners are hired by the Partnership in conjunction with the school principal to help students with basic education, employment readiness skills, and placement. They are funded by the PIC, as most Partnership students meet the eligibility criteria for enrollment in the federally funded Job Training Partnership Act employment and training program, which the PIC oversees. Job placement responsibilities are directed by the Partnership's executive director; educational responsibilities and interaction with students and faculty are directed by the appropriate school principal. As needed, the students are referred to and receive remedial instruction or tutoring through their schools.

The Partnership supports basic education in the schools through student-to-student tutoring, a district tutorial center, and support for classroom teachers. Plans for including computer-assisted instruction as an additional resource have been developed. A career counseling curriculum was created to reduce the dropout rate and enhance the employability of students. This curriculum meets the standards established by the U.S. Department of Labor for improving the basic and employment skills of disadvantaged youth, and the standards of the local and state boards of education. It includes occupational information, career assessment, development of positive work habits, techniques in applying for jobs, job-seeking skills, and work survival components, including how to accept criticism, solve problems, and make decisions.

The Partnership's work is not limited to students. It has also developed a training program for supervisors who are, or will be, working with the students on their jobs. This half-

day workshop focuses on workplace expectations, standards, communication, and guidance. It is based on employer interest and meets their need to better understand and develop the potential of students entering the workforce for the first time.

After the first year of the Partnership, students participating in the program reduced the number of days absent by 17 percent from the same period in the prior year. The number of dropouts in the school system declined after the first year of the Partnership's operation from 1,496 to 1,136. Of the 1,237 students served in the Partnership, only 31 dropped out. Students in the Partnership reduced the number of subjects failed by 12 percent.

For more information on the Louisville Partnership contact: Martin Bell, Executive Director, The Louisville Education & Employment Partnership, (502) 581-9155.

The Portland Investment

The Portland Investment was formed in 1984 to consolidate fragmented youth employment programs and increase private sector involvement in the schools. Implemented through the joint efforts of the city's youth service providers, the Portland Investment represents a ten-year regional plan to combat youth unemployment. The Investment's goals are to expand long-term job opportunities for disadvantaged youth, improve their employability, and strengthen coordination of existing programs for disadvantaged children, from prenatal care through age 21.

Preceding the Investment's implementation, a multi-agency planning team representing business, schools, city government, and the Urban League, began weekly meetings to develop a collaborative youth strategy. In 1984, this group became known as the Leaders Roundtable, bringing together key business, education, and youth agencies. The Roundtable created a "Master Agreement," establishing fundamental goals for the Portland Investment that included reducing the dropout rate, increasing the number of jobs available for youth, and providing youth with the basic education and employability skills needed to get and keep a job.

Task forces developed a continuum of services, focusing on prevention for younger children and remediation for the older ones. All programs combine academic preparation, remediation, employability skills training, and support services. Sixteen programs, both in school and out of school, have been created to introduce youth to the world of work and help set life goals. Most of the programs operate year-round in the schools. The Portland Public School District coordinates the delivery of the programs in conjunction with the Private Industry Council, the Business Youth Exchange, and other members of the Partnership.

The service continuum allows progression through various programs, providing many of the young people with increasingly responsible work experiences as they go through school. By the time the students graduate from high school, they are expected to be ready for jobs—job opportunities that the Leaders Roundtable guarantee will be available. Investment graduates receive a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED), plus a certificate attesting to workplace readiness. This certificate supports the "guarantee" of an employment opportunity, offering students a further incentive to complete their education.

The Business/Youth Exchange (BYE) is the Investment's business intermediary organization. It brokers business involvement with the Investment's 16 programs and provides speakers, mentors, curriculum development assistance, and jobs. It provides a central resource for business and the schools to obtain assistance in developing quality job preparation for youth. A legal affiliate of the Portland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, the BYE has an independent board of 20 members. Core budget funding comes from local companies and corporate foundations. Each of the Portland Investment's programs has a coordinator who works directly with the Business Youth Exchange to provide information on business' needs.

Of the total 2,600 youth served through the Portland Investment, 94 percent have remained in school. Graduation rates for seniors in this same group fluctuate between 92 and 98 percent. Participants increased reading and math levels almost two grade levels during a one-year period and are maintaining 2.0 grade averages. The Investment's teen parent program recently had 70 percent of its participants go on to college or further training.

For more information on the Portland Investment, contact: Eva Parsons, Executive Director, Business Youth Exchange of the Portland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, (503) 228-8617.

A Detailed Look at Planning Issues in Jobs Collaboratives

The planning and development of a Jobs Collaborative requires leaders to address issues that relate to the implementation of the program itself, as well as to current activities of schools and businesses. This section outlines some of these critical issues. Students are asked to work hard in school; schools are asked to increase the value of their diplomas; businesses are asked to structure job and career opportunities to make these efforts clearly worthwhile. There are no "right" approaches. In implementing a program design for their Jobs Collaborative, community leaders will need to assess the best alternative based on local conditions.

The number of schools to be included in the project.

Piloting the program in a few select schools instead of establishing a systemwide effort can provide an opportunity to review the program and its effect on school and business activities. The amount of funding available and the timeframe for funding have an impact on the number of schools to be included. Boston began its Jobs Collaborative in three schools, while Louisville began a program in 19 of its 23 high schools during the first year of operation.

Academic credit for job readiness training.

School systems need to address the issues of time, space, and credit when including the Jobs Collaborative as part of their education program. Students and faculty will be more supportive and invested in the operation and goals of the program if it is given the validation of accreditation. Students needing credits to meet graduation requirements may be among those most in need of the program, and they cannot afford to participate unless academic credit is given. These issues raise other questions about state and local accreditation processes. Where will the program fit academically? Are there any union concerns to be addressed?

Integrating the job readiness curriculum into the schools.

Linking career awareness and job readiness activities to academic coursework is occurring in many schools as educators become more aware of the need to connect education to the realities of the workplace. Typically, this occurs at an administrative level through curriculum development staff with input by teachers. It does not, however, include all of the targeted programming and activities of a school-to-work transition program. The integration of a Jobs Collaborative requires addressing many top-down policy and resource issues. These include fitting it into an already busy school day, finding available space within the school, as well as developing a curriculum that makes the link between academic learning and future occupations.

The principals are key to how the program is accepted and integrated into the schools. As programs are developed in their schools, principals need to be involved with decisions on program performance, standards of operation, staffing, and accountability for meeting agreed-upon goals.

Linking the Jobs Collaborative with other jobs programs to reduce duplication of available services.

There are often many employment and training or cooperative work programs and support services both inside and outside the school system. Taking an inventory of these programs and services is a good first step toward understanding the resources available to students and the capacity of these services to meet existing and projected needs. Systems for coordinating services with students, contacting businesses for jobs and other support, and sharing labor market information should be discussed among program partners and appropriate community organizations.

Targeting participants.

The number of students targeted for the program depends on several factors—program resources and the capacity of the schools and intermediary to prepare students; the needs and demands of the workforce to hire the student workers; and the students' interest and commitment to participate. Potential program design criteria might include:

- Making the program available to all students in the 11th and 12th grades who are not going on to further training or higher education.
- Targeting at-risk youth based upon locally determined factors. Targeting students as early as middle school

can provide a continuum of services and employment opportunities to sustain at-risk youth throughout high school.

- Limiting eligibility based on criteria set by specific funding sources. Utilizing certain funding sources might preclude the involvement of some youth based on eligibility requirements.

Enrollment procedures.

- Special attention should be paid to presenting the program and its opportunities in a positive, up-beat manner, rather than on the basis of a student's economic or achievement status.

Enrollment in the program should be voluntary with clearly stated expectations for student participation and performance. A written contract, signed by the student, helps to reinforce commitment.

Organizing the jobs.

- A system for organizing a pool of jobs for students and graduates is a key responsibility of the business sector. In identifying appropriate jobs for youth, the factors to be considered are discussed in the next section. Developing suitable entry-level jobs for students is the intermediary's primary responsibility. New jobs must be developed after the initial job pledges in order to provide a succession of opportunities for students and graduates. Job commitment, follow-up and ongoing job development should include extensive information about the companies.

The business community is in a unique position to organize job opportunities for young people. Neither the government nor other public institutions can mobilize the demand side of the labor market. This is the major commitment of the business leadership as they move into the planning of the Jobs Collaborative. A group of CEOs, the Chamber of Commerce, the Private Industry Council, or other local business organization should assume primary responsibility for a campaign to mobilize jobs. Although the program may start on a small scale, job opportunities should ultimately be assured systemwide for all high school graduates. Initially this may appear to be an unrealistic expectation depending upon the local labor market. However, an analysis of the number of graduates going directly into the labor market compared to the total number of entry-level positions available with career path potential will likely yield easily manageable numbers of needed job pledges.

The following three sections describe the responsibilities of each of the partners in these collaborative efforts. As the following chart depicts, there are overlapping tasks that necessitate cooperative decision making among sectors.

Responsibilities of Jobs Collaborative Partners

EDUCATION	INTERMEDIARY	BUSINESS
Joint Decisions of All Partners Identify shared practical vision Make sustained and visible commitment Develop resources Identify management structure/intermediary organization Assign program implementers Develop measurable goals and review mechanisms Review and agree on job readiness training curricula		
Education/Intermediary Decisions Develop criteria for student participation Secure support services and parental involvement Target, recruit, and select students		
	Intermediary/Business Decisions Organize job commitments Orient and train supervisors Review student progress Provide job counseling	
Develop remedial instruction	Identify jobs	Make job pledges
Coordinate with other programs	Match students with jobs	Identify jobs & supervisors
Designate contact staff	Follow up with student & employer	Designate contact staff
Monitor achievement/attendance	Support teachers & other personnel	Examine policy & resource decisions
	Maintain student records & tracking	Provide support services
	Broker other business involvement	Recognize individuals involved

Business' Roles and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of business in a school-to-work transition program is to provide jobs for in-school young people and recent graduates. Business leaders need to realize that this commitment will require that they devote additional company time and resources in hiring first-time, entry-level workers.

The following describes specific roles business can play and issues they should address to insure that their side of the partnership is successful. Many tasks overlap with roles and responsibilities of the other partners. The partners need to agree on a division of responsibilities based on each sector's needs, capacities, and goals, and on the youth's best interests.

"We buy the patience of supervisors of these young workers through personnel assuming the costs of the wages. Supervisors can spend more time with young people to bring them along without costing the department's budget."

Greg Ness, Assistant Vice President, Human Resources, Standard Insurance Company, Portland, Oregon.

A. Business community roles and responsibilities

Organize job pledges. These pledges represent a community promise to secure job opportunities for qualified students. Pledging specific jobs for these students by business reinforces the company's commitment to develop future workers. A concerned business leader or leaders will typically take the lead in organizing the jobs commitment campaign. In Louisville, business leaders hosted a breakfast for over 250 companies that agreed to support the efforts of The Louisville Education & Employment Partnership. These companies signed a document pledging jobs and other business support; the document was circulated throughout the community to publicize their commitment to this program. Follow-up on pledges resulted in 1,228 part-time, summer, and full-time jobs created in 137 companies.

Provide information for and review the job readiness curriculum. Businesses need to work closely with the intermediary organization and school personnel to design a job readiness training curriculum that effectively prepares youth for the demands of the workplace. Final approval will generally be made by the school system, particularly if the curriculum is going to be integrated into regular school studies for academic credit. However, business best understands the skills and work behaviors required of its entry-level employees, and suggestions from local personnel associations, industry representatives, and other resources can enhance the final product. If a school system already offers job readiness training, business people should review the curriculum to see if it meets their needs and suggest changes as appropriate. In Pittsburgh, companies are providing a list of workplace competencies that can be used throughout the entire local academic school curriculum.

Secure funds to support the Jobs Collaborative program and the hiring of students. There are two major funding needs for Jobs Collaborative programs: one is for the administration of the program to support intermediary or school staff to work with students and companies; the other is for student workers' wages. Businesses, school, and other community leaders should work together creatively to secure funds to support the overall effort. Federal employment and training program funds through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) can be used for training and placement activities. Federal tax credits may be used to offset hiring and wage costs of these young workers. In larger companies, summer youth workers are typically paid for through personnel or the human resource department rather than departmental budgets.

Influence policy and resource decisions in ways that would enhance the collaborative program. Some collaboratives are tackling local, state, and federal policies that can influence the funding or implementation of a Jobs Collaborative. *To generate more funds for local partnership activities, members of the Albuquerque Business/Education Compact approached the state legislature to include 'disadvantaged youth' as a factor in state funding allocation formulas.* Companies also need to examine internal policies or practices that might inhibit participation, e.g., union contracts, wage and hour laws, or work permit requirements. Public and private sector policies that inhibit collaboration should be identified and

addressed. Businesses' "clout" combined with education and government's technical knowledge of issues and procedures can be a powerful combination to remove barriers.

B. Individual company roles and responsibilities

Provide leadership commitment and support to the program. Management's encouragement of staff participation in the program will help establish a corporate climate that reinforces the company's commitment to bringing disadvantaged youth into the workforce and developing their skills. This is particularly true in encouraging supervisors to understand the importance of their role in stimulating and helping the students to succeed.

Make company job pledges. Before pledging jobs, executives should determine the number, location, and types of jobs available for Jobs Collaborative students. Reviewing the company's history with job pledges to similar types of programs is the best place to start. Then the task is to determine how many jobs exist or could be created to provide students with a valuable work education and contribute to company productivity? *"Don't do this on an altruistic basis. Find a place in the company where there is a real need for entry-level labor."* Curtis Smith, Vice President, Human Resources, Willamette Savings, Portland, Oregon.

Identify appropriate jobs and supervisors. In assessing potential job opportunities, businesses must assure that jobs pledged are appropriate to the abilities of young hires and that the young workers are supervised by flexible, competent managers. Intermediary or school staff must work with company personnel to assess the job's potential, the job requirements and duties, and the company's personnel people must understand students' abilities and limitations. Many youth entering the workplace for the first time will be intimidated by the environment and reluctant to ask for clarification or direction or to express concerns. Supervisors need to be sensitive to these issues and clear about whether the job meets the student's and company's needs. Standards for job performance should not be lowered, but expectations of the time needed for students to meet these standards may need to be revised. Provident Bank in Philadelphia considers its school-to-work students to be in an extended training period, allowing them extra time to meet established job performance standards.

Develop additional training, support, and opportunities within the company for the student workers. Changing demographics and labor shortages are forcing employers to accept individuals for employment who are not as prepared for work as were previous workers. Involvement in a school-to-work transition program can help employers prepare for the increasingly diverse workforce of the future. Companies can increase the value of the work experience and the potential for success of these student workers by developing support services. Providing mentoring, counseling, and, in some cases, remedial assistance can result in im-

In Boston, the school district provides funding to the Private Industry Council to support salaries of Career Specialists who work with youth in the schools. Foundation, private, and JTPA funds support the administration of the Boston Compact through the PIC. Companies receive support toward the hiring and wage costs of student workers from tax credits.

In Louisville, business, school, and government funds support the administration of the Partnership. JTPA funds support the salaries of the Career Planners. Companies absorb all hiring and salary costs of students.

proved job performance and better worker adjustment. The intermediary and/or the local Private Industry Council are resources for information on developing these services. Career paths within a company should be outlined for these students, connecting promotional opportunities to academic accomplishment and successful performance on the job.

Designate contact staff. A single contact should be established within the company to channel communications among the businesses, the schools, and the intermediary organization. Procedures should be developed jointly with the schools and intermediary organization to create a referral system and methods for monitoring student performance, for reviewing program activities, and for coordinating with other programs and services.

Orient supervisors. Although Jobs Collaborative students are chosen on the basis of their motivation to work and potential to be valuable employees, this is probably their first exposure to the corporate work environment. Supervising these youth might present extra challenges for the staff responsible for students' development and direction. Special orientations should be provided, in conjunction with the intermediary organization, to assist the supervisors in understanding and developing the potential of these young workers.

Support and recognize supervisors, other employees, and students involved in the Jobs Collaborative program. Recognition is a powerful tool and motivator for students and staff who have invested their time and energy in making the collaborative a success. Visible support and encouragement from top corporate leadership, through special events and company publications, can generate the enthusiasm and involvement of others.

Education's Roles and Responsibilities

Initiation, planning, implementation, and oversight of a Jobs Collaborative must have the full involvement of educators at all levels. Educators have the most knowledge about students and the services necessary to generate their students' success.

The following are the major roles and responsibilities of educators in the Jobs Collaborative process.

- **Provide leadership commitment and support for the program.** The structure of a school system is not unlike that of many corporations. There are usually multiple levels between the top administration and the frontline workers who develop the "product." Visible top-level commitment is necessary to sustain support for the collaborative from all levels of the school system. The school board, superintendent, administration, teachers' unions, principals, teachers, counselors, and other staff should all be aware of the program. As the collaborative is developed, everyone should be involved in its planning. Principals need to be involved in the selection of the schools and approval of collaborative staff housed in their schools; teachers and counselors need to be involved in developing the curriculum and assessing the need for support services.

- **Target, recruit, and select participants for the Jobs Collaborative.** Jobs Collaboratives are likely to function in urban schools with a high ratio of students from low-income families. Participation in the program and the promise of a job opportunity should be tied to levels of student academic performance and attendance in school. Students who are motivated and work to meet school standards deserve the opportunities and rewards offered in Jobs Collaborative programs.

  Program funding sources will affect the selection of participants. These sources, such as JTPA, may also dictate that student recruitment be tied to economic and educational deficiencies.

  The school system's data base on students represents the primary source of information on the potential target population. Since data may not be collected in a format useful to a collaborative program, clarifying definitions and types of data needed by all partners will expedite the collaborative process. Student recruitment should be handled via the intermediary and the school system. Flyers, in-school announcements, community outreach, teacher/parent/counselor referrals, or student walk-ins are all good sources of student recruitment. Each student should be prepared to convince an interviewer that he or she wants the job and is capable of doing the work. Students should understand that they may turn down a job if they do not think it is suitable.

- **Provide support services for program participants.** In the planning of the collaborative, it is useful to conduct an inventory of support services available for youth in the community. Health, individual, and family counseling services are often available in the school but may be overloaded. Access to services outside the schools can be critical to the growth and development of the participants. The school and intermediary should also attempt to involve parents as a source of support. Parents could be encouraged to participate during an orientation to the program and required to co-sign participation contracts with their children who are enrolled.

In Louisville, guidelines for student eligibility in the Partnership program include a specific definition of a student who is "at risk." As in other communities, youth exhibiting poor academic performance, those who are above age for grade level, those with fluctuating attendance patterns, and those from economically disadvantaged households meet the definition. However, these youth must maintain certain standards in order to remain in the program. Being motivated to work, receiving an employment opportunity, and achieving success on the job can be an important turning point for these youth.

"A buy-in for all partners at the beginning of the process assures that everyone, including the schools, feels like equal partners."

Kathy Hostager, Business Liaison, Portland Public Schools.

Develop and deliver the curriculum with the intermediary and business. Business is expected to hire the final product of the school system. The importance of involving business in curriculum development is therefore important, particularly in programs targeted to specific industries. In the Financial Services Academy program in Portland, staff from area financial institutions worked with school and intermediary staff to help revise basic English and math curricula to reflect the industry's skill performance requirements. They specifically recommended that values clarification and conflict resolution components be included in the program in order to better equip students to work with customers.

Coordinate the Jobs Collaborative with other work-related programs. Vocational education, cooperative education, work-study, university-school partnerships, and partnerships with social service agencies and community-based, work-related programs, might also be operating within the school district. Where feasible, the school system should coordinate these with the Jobs Collaborative, establishing for business a single point of contact with the schools or intermediary organization around school-to-work services. A system by which programs share job leads, contacts and resources presents an organized and efficient image to the business community and prevents business from being inundated with representatives from various programs. Schools should also contact the local Employment Service office to coordinate with its job development efforts.

Meet performance standards as defined by agreement with other partners. Business' commitment to jobs is easily measured, as is the success and mobility of students once on the job. Business measures change on a short-term basis. Sweeping and fundamental changes in education are a long-term process. Schools need to demonstrate to business, through incremental improvements, that they are working toward the long-term, agreed-upon goals. Improvements in the performance of school-to-work transition program students is a step in improving the overall performance of the school system through community partnerships.

Intermediary's Roles and Responsibilities

An **intermediary** is the independent organization whose primary goal in a Jobs Collaborative is to broker the schools' and business' efforts to provide employment opportunities for youth. It must objectively represent two different institutions with distinctly different missions. This can be a challenging task. Successful school-to-work transition programs all utilize an intermediary organization to bridge the gap between the two partners. Trust and credibility are more readily earned by the intermediary if it is not directly connected with the schools or employers. This enables the intermediary to support both sides of the partnership objectively.

The primary purpose of the intermediary is to organize and administer the school-to-work transition program. An intermediary is expected to advocate effectively and equally for business, the schools, and the youth. It maintains the critical communication link between business and the schools; it collects feedback from both partners on their needs and concerns about the students and program.

An intermediary needs to have access to all levels of both organizations to analyze and respond to the interests of both partners. The Chamber of Commerce or Private Industry Council can often play the role of an effective intermediary, while, in some cases, a separate, cooperatively funded organization can be created to do the job.

The following represents the roles and responsibilities of the intermediary.

Design and deliver a job readiness training curriculum in conjunction with designated school staff and business. The intermediary organization is the conduit that links business and education through which business provides information on the workplace skills needed by a young person to succeed on the job. Follow-up with business on the effectiveness of the job readiness curriculum and modification as needed is important. The delivery of job readiness training should mesh effectively with the regular school day schedule.

Match students to jobs. The more information that is known about a job and a youth's interests, the better staff will be able to make a correct match. In making appropriate referrals, staff need to consider student interests, skill levels, maturity, attitude, and previous work experience. In addition, providing students with information about the job, the work environment, type and amount of supervision, transportation, and daycare, if necessary, will help to assure the optimal match. Although staff schedule interviews, students are not guaranteed jobs and should be prepared to compete for the positions.

Follow-up with the employer and student. After students have successfully competed for and obtained jobs, the role of the intermediary shifts to job adjustment and success. Staff need to monitor student success at school and on the job to ensure the connection between continued employment and continued school performance. The intermediary organization staff should establish themselves with the company as a means to facilitate solutions for any problems that may develop. The intermediary organization should

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"The program creates an awareness that we visibly care about all kids—tomorrow's workforce resource. This begins to create a change in attitude and style in the classroom. Teachers see the program as a resource in helping them deal more effectively with students with difficulties, and realize these students can be successful."

Don Ingwerson, Superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, Kentucky.

"The Partnership program is a realistic opportunity for both young people and the business community. In today's competitive job market, students need the education and training, career awareness, and job opportunities this program offers. Business and industry profit from having available better-trained, experienced personnel. This is an important investment in our future."

Deanna Philpot
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kentucky
Louisville, Kentucky

secure needed support services and be an effective advocate for the student.

Support teachers and other school personnel in working with at-risk youth. The school-to-work transition program can become a valuable resource to teachers and counseling staff who are working with special needs students.

Maintain student records and systematic tracking of student participation, placements, and follow-up activities. Measures on which program and student success will be evaluated should be clear to all partners in the Jobs Collaborative. The intermediary should collect baseline data on students to track their progress in the program, and information on placements and expenditures. School records and information on employers are important sources to establish benchmarks for measuring pledges against hires, the results of job development, placements and student mobility in the workplace. Follow-up on graduates can also be valuable information in measuring program impact.

Broker other business involvement in the schools and in work programs. The intermediary organization is in an ideal position to broker business interest in and involvement with the schools on other efforts. As the business community experiences success with a school-to-work transition program, it can better understand the issues and problems facing educators. As a result, business can consolidate its position as an advocate and assume a greater role in supporting the education of a quality workforce.

Conclusion

The answer to the question "who will do the work to maintain a healthy economy" lies primarily within our educational institutions, which are charged with the responsibility of developing the academic, social, and workplace skills of our future workers. Social and technological changes now dictate that education become a broad community responsibility. Educators, business, government, and parents must work together to prepare the next generation of productive citizens.

"School reform" is a term widely used to identify a solution to the education crisis facing this country. The definition of the problem varies by school district and community. This publication does not address the complex issue of school reform, but identifies one component of a collaborative effort in which schools and employers can work together to prepare youth for the workplace. Through access to jobs, we can spark the interest and willingness of young people to complete their education. School-to-work transition programs, such as the Jobs Collaborative, can help youth understand the connection between their education and their future. A job, in combination with academic training and support services, can help in the total development of our youth and the ultimate development of a quality workforce.

This publication stresses the importance of collaboration and community partnerships to address complex workforce issues. Change and progress are possible through the joining of traditionally diverse partners, brought together to solve a common problem that cannot be solved individually. Each partner must hold the other accountable to agreed-upon outcomes. As a part of or the beginning of a larger collaborative agreement, these programs can develop important communication links, brokered by an intermediary organization, between schools and businesses.

While school-to-work transition programs are not the single answer to school reform or to the many problems facing today's youth, they are a way for business to make a significant contribution to preparing our young people. They can help youth make the connection between what they learn today and what they can do tomorrow.

"Our business community must be involved as business leaders. We are concerned not only about losing segments of our population to poverty. We are investing in our future employees, customers, and stockholders."

Malcolm Chancey
Executive Vice President
Liberty National Bank
Louisville, Kentucky

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The National Alliance of Business builds business partnerships with government, labor, and education to assure quality in the American workforce. The Alliance shapes social policies to improve education and strengthen job training, to develop versatility, and to instill the values essential to success in the modern workplace.

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The Alliance is a business-led organization which builds business partnerships with government, labor and education to assure quality in the American workforce. Membership affords an opportunity to join with like-minded corporations and individuals working to improve quality in education and the American workforce. As a member, you have access to some 40 NAB staff specialists on education, training and workforce issues.

Call (202) 289-2848, or write:
Philip H. Yasinski
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"As skilled employees become more difficult to find, we, as business leaders, need to become increasingly involved in shaping our future workforce. . . the NAB has been a leader in increasing awareness of these problems and in offering sensible, cost effective solutions for building a quality workforce."

EDMUND T. PRATT, JR.
Chairman, Pfizer, Inc.
Chairman, The Business Roundtable

"The Alliance is doing more than any other organization in America to forge meaningful partnerships between the business and education communities. Partnerships that, to my mind, are absolutely essential . . . if America is to retain her economic strength and international competitiveness."

JOHN ONG
Chairman and CEO,
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